



## United States Senator

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.  
PENNSYLVANIA

April 22, 2019

Chairman Tom Perez  
Democratic National Committee  
430 South Capitol St. SE  
Washington, DC 20003.

Dear Chairman Perez:

I write today to strongly encourage the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to host one of its 12 announced presidential primary debates in Pennsylvania. It is my understanding that at least two localities within the Commonwealth have already extended invitations.

When Donald Trump won the presidency by becoming the first Republican since 1988 to win Pennsylvania, it was a wake-up call. Led by the DNC, Democrats collectively answered that call by pouring time, effort, and significant resources into organizing for 2018. These investments were a key part of the success that Pennsylvania Democrats had up and down the ballot last November. We achieved overwhelming victories in the races for Governor and United States Senate. We turned several congressional seats from red to blue, sending four women to Washington for the first time in the Commonwealth's history, and helping ensure a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives. We also made significant gains in the state House and Senate that put control of the legislature within reach this election cycle. We must keep building on that momentum.

Simply put: Democrats cannot afford to lose Pennsylvania if we hope to defeat President Trump in 2020. The Commonwealth has always been a structurally-close state in a political sense. Presidential elections are almost always narrowly decided. For example, the difference in 2016 was only 0.7%; further evidence that every investment, every single engagement can make a difference towards a successful electoral outcome. We have to do everything we can to fight for every vote, here in Pennsylvania and across the country.

To that end, our primary debates present the strongest opportunities to introduce our candidates and their agendas to the electorate. We must make early investments in communities and counties that clearly convey the broad reach of our party. Pennsylvania is the fifth largest state in the Nation and at the center of innovation in critical areas such as medicine, energy, and higher education. Its sprawling rural populations and urban cores reflect a cross-section of America that can be found together in few other states, reflecting a diversity that is indicative of the broad and varied coalition Democrats hope to build this cycle.

The 2020 presidential election is arguably the most important presidential election since 1932, which ushered in the New Deal in the wake of the Great Depression. Pennsylvania's importance to a Democratic victory cannot be overstated, and the Keystone State must be a critical component of any electoral strategy. I have no doubt that you understand this significance, and it is my hope that you and the DNC will do everything possible to help build upon our historic wins in 2018 and turn Pennsylvania blue again. I believe the Commonwealth, the party and, by extension, the country stand to benefit from a presidential primary debate held here.

Thank you for your strong, engaged leadership of our party. I stand ready to assist in any way I can to help bring a primary debate to Pennsylvania, and to ensure that Democrats take back the White House next November.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator